



The

Monday Update

May, 2003

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Special Report

Understanding Medicaid Buy-in: The basics for advocates

What is the status of Michigan's Medicaid buy-in legislation? In fact, what is Medicaid buy-in and why people with disabilities who are working, or wish to work, should be concerned? Here are some buy-in basics and an opportunity to have your voice heard regarding this important issue.

Medicaid coverage provides health services for people with low income. Founded 30 years ago, SSI helps, in the words of the Social Security Administration (SSA), millions of people who have low incomes, few assets, and who have disabilities.

Losing services

If a person with disabilities earns over a certain amount of money on the job or acquires too many assets, he or she loses SSI and Medicaid services. In such cases, a person must purchase coverage in the private market, hope that his or her employer's insurance plan will cover it, or go without.

A Medicaid buy-in program will allow a person to keep Medicaid by paying a premium, which is based on the person's wages.

A person eligible for SSI loses cash benefits when his or her earned income currently approaches \$14,268, and it disappears entirely over that amount. He or she does keep Medicaid, however, until his or her annual earned income currently reaches \$22,262. Personal assets must be kept at a prescribed maximum of \$2,000.

So, it can cost less to not work under some circumstances. It can at times be difficult enough for a person with disabilities to find work, let alone work that pays a fair wage.

To know that a decent job means loss of health benefits is a major disincentive. Often, a person under these circumstances will stop working or reduce their hours because they cannot pay for all their medical expenses.

Too important

The coverage Medicaid provides is too important to risk, so many people with disabilities choose to not work or to suppress earnings.

The loss of Medicaid coverage not only represents a loss for the worker with disabilities, but a loss for Michigan as well. The state's economy needs the skills of its residents with disabilities. With a job, a person with disabilities who might otherwise consume tax dollars would instead pay income taxes.

The solution? Michigan needs to change the state law to permit workers with disabilities to buy into their medical coverage and pay for it based on their income.

Since the Ticket to Work & Work Incentives Act in 1999 gave the go-ahead to do so, some states have enacted legislation that establishes Medicaid buy-in plan.

Once a state has a plan, it needs to be approved by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). About 25 states have had their Medicaid buy-in plans approved by CMS. Other states' plans are somewhere in the approval process.

In Michigan

Michigan is one of about 15 states whose buy-in legislation is pending. That may change this year with the introduction of State Senate Bill 22 (S.B.22) by Senators Shirley Johnson and Gerald Van Woerkam.

The Michigan Department of Community Health and Sen. Johnson, as well as the DD Council and other key advocates, are committed to developing a buy-in program that truly improves employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Advocates are meeting with policymakers to negotiate the details of the program.

One of the most active and vocal advocates for Medicaid buy-in legislation is the MiJob Coalition, of which the DD Council is a member. The 34-member coalition's self-description is "A statewide alliance for the removal of barriers to the employment of persons with disabilities."

Reduce by 70 percent

According to the coalition, not only will a buy-in plan permit workers with disabilities to keep their Medicaid coverage, pay income tax and reduce dependency on public assistance, it may also "reduce the 70 percent unemployment rate among people with disabilities."

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A MiJob Coalition survey indicates that four out of five Michigan residents with disabilities surveyed who are not working "would work if they could keep their health coverage." As the coalition states, S.B. 22 is a work incentive program, not welfare!

Among the features the coalition wants to see come out of the legislation are buy-in application procedures that are simple to use and understand. During these days of fiscal belt-tightening, of course, there are financial concerns. To become law, the bill must be "revenue neutral." That is, it cannot take money from already-low state accounts.

To save money in these tight budget times, the plan would at first be limited to those people already on Medicaid. The coalition believes there are between 130,000 and 140,000 people with disabilities in Michigan who receive SSI or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) who may benefit from S.B. 22.

Unearned income

The proposed buy-in program for people with disabilities who: receive SSI and those who receive SSDI and have unearned income of less than 100 percent of the federal poverty level; and who are working and find themselves over the limit, would pay for coverage on a graduated scale.

The more salary they make, the more they would pay for the coverage, but they would not be at risk of having the coverage cut off completely, as they are now.

As proposed in the legislation, the plan could allow participants to accumulate assets, including a retirement savings program.

What can you do to help this project through the Legislature and into practice? Before S.B. 22 is voted upon, you could contact your state senator and representative and urge them to

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vote for the bill. If you're not sure of your legislators' addresses, feel free to contact the Council's public policy analyst, Tandy Bidinger, at 517-334-7355.

If you'd like more information on the MiJob Coalition and S.B. 22, contact the Michigan Association of Centers for Independent Living.

Their number is 517-339-0539. They will provide local resources for you to contact.

March proclaimed Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

For perhaps the first time ever, Michigan residents with developmental disabilities have been officially recognized in a governor's official proclamation.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm proclaimed March 2003 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in Michigan. The proclamation recognizes the contributions of people with developmental disabilities and emphasizes their rights to full participation in all phases of life in the Great Lakes State.

The governor's proclamation was requested by the DD Council. Similar March proclamations are issued annually in a number of other states.

The proclamation points out that people with developmental disabilities comprise nearly two percent of the state's population, with whom they share the same rights when it comes to making choices in their lives. These choices include a job, transportation, housing and recreation.

The new proclamation calls upon residents of Michigan to recognize the contributions and commitments of people with developmental disabilities and celebrate the diversity that enriches each community.

The council hopes to have March, 2004 proclaimed as developmental disabilities awareness month in time to permit local advocates to celebrate this important recognition. The original, signed proclamation is at the council office.

The governor's proclamation reads:

Whereas,
Developmental disabilities affect more than 180,000 Michigan children and adults in every county across our state; and,

Whereas,
People with developmental disabilities make up nearly two percent of the state's population; and,

Whereas,
Every person, regardless of ability, has valuable strengths, infinite capacity to learn, and the potential to make important contributions to their local and state communities; and,

Whereas,
People with developmental disabilities in Michigan share with the state's other nine million residents the right to live life as they choose in their education, jobs, recreation and homes; and,

Whereas,
Families deserve our admiration and recognition for their caring commitment and ongoing support that are both essential to an independent and productive life for people with developmental disabilities; and,

Whereas,

Celebrating the abilities and contributions of people with developmental disabilities can only serve to enrich the communities of Michigan, enhance diversity and help to build One Michigan Family; now therefore be it

Resolved, That I, Jennifer Granholm, Governor of the State of Michigan, do hereby proclaim March, 2003 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in Michigan.

Contacting the Governor for office hours

At Gov. Granholm's state website is an opportunity to meet with her during office hours. She will be holding office hours each month to meet directly with citizens in 10-minute time intervals and share their concerns and ideas.

This an opportunity for people with developmental disabilities, their families, and advocates to go to directly to the top and talk with the governor about their lives and being included in the life of the community.

In order to be considered for the Governor's office hours, a person must mail or fax a written request. Requests must include your name, address, daytime phone number and the issue you wish to discuss with Gov. Granholm. Send the written request to:

Office of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
Constituent Services Division
George M. Romney Building
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

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The fax number is: 517-335-6863.

This information is also available at the Governor's website, www.michigan.gov/gov.

The Constituent Services Division is a new office that is available to help Michigan residents cut through red tape and help solve other problems that relate to state government. The office is located across from the Capitol Building in downtown Lansing. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Or, you can contact the office at 517-335-7858.

National child development conference scheduled for October in New Orleans

The National Black Child Development Institute, a nonprofit education and service organization, will sponsor its 33rd annual conference in New Orleans. The dates are Oct. 19 - 21, 2003. Theme for the conference is Overcoming the Barriers: Achieving Excellence and Success.

Sight for the conference is the New Orleans Hyatt Regency. Nearly 3,000 educators, including early childhood and elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators, human service providers, policy makers, parents, and researchers will meet to share models for improving the lives of African American children and families.

Over 90 workshops and seminars will be conducted by leaders in the field and will provide meaningful dialogue around the conference theme.

For more information, telephone the institute toll free at 1-800-556-2234.

Council committee and work group meeting minutes

Here are minutes from recent DD Council committee and work group meetings.

Meetings of all the committees and work groups are open to the public and visitors are welcome. For a current schedule, please contact the council office at 517-334-6123.

Program Committee

January

Issue: Summary of December meeting.
Summary of Actions: Corrected Summary of Actions of the December meeting was handed out. By consensus, it was approved as corrected.

Issue: Request for Proposals boilerplate for RICC Mini-Grants
Summary of Actions: The Committee reviews proposed changes to the boilerplate language for the RICC Mini-Grant RFP, which is issued annually. After some discussion, language about allowing multi-RICC proposals to apply for more than \$8,000 was modified to emphasize the Council's preference for being able to make awards for projects on diverse topics and in various areas of the state.

Issue: Education Workgroup: Update
Summary of Actions: Lynne Tamor and Karen Massaro-Mundt discussed the activities of the Education Workgroup. In addition to Monitoring the SEAC and state board of Education, they are preparing a presentation to the DD Council about school inclusion and what's happening in Michigan in that arena.

Issue: Self-Determination Mobilization Team: Update

Summary of Actions: Trommater and Ashley reported that the project directors and staff for all of the Self-Determination projects had their first quarterly meeting as the Mobilization Team, to initiate their plan for working together to mobilize consumer demand for supports for self-determination statewide. Included were the projects for Enhancement And Expansion of Self-Determination, for Family-Based Preparation for Self-Determined Adulthood, for Preventing Guardianship and the state-level project to develop parent networks for school inclusion.

Issue: Grant writer's Academy.
Summary of Actions: Trommater and Ashley distributed a preliminary schedule for a grant writer's academy to be coordinated with the RFP for RICC Mini-Grants. The Committee liked the idea and thought it important to encourage participants to come as teams, to emphasize that writing a grant proposal is not a one-person job.

Issue: Grantee Report: Co-Power and PASFORCE
Summary of Actions: Jane Schoneman and Kim Steele, both from Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC), reported on these projects, emphasizing their efforts to coordinate their activities.

Issue: Longitudinal studies of council grant projects
Summary of Actions: Ashley distributed the papers on the council's grants in the areas of education and transportation. He also discussed the focus groups that staff is developing with current and former grantees and other stakeholders to link the longitudinal studies to the council's planning process.

March

Issue: Summary of January meeting.

Summary of Actions: It was approved by consensus.

Issue: Request for Proposals boilerplate for RICC Mini-Grants Summary of Actions: This was the final draft of revisions the workgroup had reviewed at its January meeting. Members discussed adding reference to low-income and homeless people to the requirements for diversity, outreach and cultural competency. Since the diversity, out reach and cultural competency language is in the boilerplate for all RFP, and it directly references Council policy that applies to all DD Council activities, it was decided that a letter from the Program Committee should go to the Multi Cultural Committee, recommending that They consider developing an expansion of the Council policy in this area to include reference to individuals and families who have low incomes and those who are homeless.

Issue: Program Specifications for the RFP for A Person-Centered Planning Evaluation (PCP) Summary of Actions: The Committee Reviewed an initial draft of these program specifications.

Suggestions included:

- It needs to be clearer:
 - About whether we are looking at the personal level and/or the community level. It also needs to say specifically that the target is the performance of the system;
 - In the activities section, that the project is just looking at PCP for people with developmental disabilities;
 - About how the project is expected to coordinate with the quality of life study. E.g., This project should do any in-depth work in the geographic areas the quality of life study is working with.
- The project should answer the questions:
 - What is the difference between the life of someone who has an individual budget and that

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of someone who doesn't?

- In looking at any particular plan or budget, to what extent does it comply with applicable guidelines? With national standards? What does it cover?

- How does someone get an individual budget? Does getting one depend on the consumer's having an advocate?

Issue: Grant writer's Academy

Summary of Actions:

Trommater and Ashley

reported that these plans are on hold until they can work out a schedule with the contractor they hoped to have present the session on foundations and private funding sources.

Issue: Grant Project Briefing Summary of Actions: Trommater reported on the progress Of the Guardianship projects. One is being Carried out by Washtenaw ACA, the other by Allegan CMH. They are completing their first quarter, and both are moving from start-up activities to community education.

Issue: Grantee Report:

Summary of Actions: Kevin Wisselink, coordinator for *Everyone Travels*, the state level transportation policy project reported on the project's activities and handed out copies of their most recent publication.

Issue: Longitudinal studies of council grant projects

Summary of Actions: Ashley reported on the progress of this project. Focus groups are finishing up, and work is proceeding on pulling the information together for the Council's retreat in May.

Housing Work Group

January

1. The meeting came to order shortly after 1:30 p.m., and those in attendance introduced themselves.

2. Council staff briefly reviewed the handout material about the DD Council.
3. Council staff reviewed the purpose of the group, including the draft charge to the group and the proposed work plan outline. Intensive discussion of the charge to the workgroup resulted in substantive revision. The revised charge to the workgroup is enclosed with the workgroup mailing for February 19, 2003.
4. Organizational and procedural decisions:
 - Agreement on Chair or Co-Chair(s): Rhonda McGill, Executive Director of Community Housing Alternatives, agreed to serve a Chair of the Workgroup.
 - Meeting schedule: The workgroup discussed meeting monthly for its first quarter, then dropping back to quarterly after subcommittees are operational and/or products are under development. A meeting was set for February 19, 2003, starting at 1:00 p.m. Meeting place will be announced. The committee may set a date for a March meeting at its February meeting.
5. Preliminary identification of issues, activities, and means for exploring opportunities:

A lively discussion accompanied the group's discussion of issues and the tasks to be undertaken. Board notes from this discussion have been organized into an "Initial Framework for Discussion." This document is also enclosed with the workgroup mailing for February 19, 2003.
6. The meeting adjourned at about 4:00.

February

1. The meeting came to order a little late because the meeting place was changed to accommodate the presentations scheduled. Those attending introduced themselves.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved by consensus.
3. The agenda was amended, changing the order of presentations to accommodate presenters who had not yet arrived. Virginia

Harmon provided a slide presentation with an overview of the housing options available to people with disabilities in Michigan. Rhonda McGill described how Washtenaw County's land trust and Section 8 vouchers interact to make home ownership available for some people with disabilities.

4. Ken Benson of Habitat for Humanity of Michigan arranged for two presentations from programs that disability advocates need to know more about.
 - A. The Prison Build Program: Mike Green describe the Michigan Department of Corrections' Prison Build program, which operates in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Michigan to provide newly built housing. Prison Build has redesigned their internal and external home panels to accommodate people with disabilities. They have operations in more than 20 corrections facilities and have built 350 homes in their four and one-half years of operation. Their emphasis is on providing quality work at the best price, and they are interested in partnering with groups interested in developing housing for people with disabilities.

To contact him:

Michael S. Green, Coordinator
 Prison Build Program
 Michigan Department of Corrections
 Grandview Plaza Building
 PO Box 30003
 Lansing, Michigan 48909

Ken Benson heartily recommended that disability groups find ways to collaborate with Prison Build.

The Michigan Capitol Fund for Housing: Keith Broadnix presented about the functions of the Michigan Capitol Fund for Housing. They raise money from banks to

purchase tax credits to provide start-up money for organizations willing to develop supportive housing. At present, everything they do is rental housing. They will add support for home ownership when a federal home ownership tax credit is available. To contact him:

Keith Broadnax, Development Coordinator

Michigan Capital Fund for Housing
1000 S. Washington Ave., Suite 200
Lansing, MI 48910

5. Maureen Szutarski, the Senior Deputy Director of Fannie Mae's Michigan Partnership Office, provided a presentation on the Fannie Mae HomeChoiceSM Mortgage. This is mortgage product that offers flexible under writing for people with disabilities with low and moderate incomes. Implementing it has required a coalition among lenders; nonprofits experienced in working with people with disabilities; and funders for down payment assistance, emergency repairs, and reserves. In general, Fannie Mae's focus is on the underserved. For additional information, contact:

- Daryl Domke, Michigan Home Alliance, (616) 363-2140
- Dorothy Byington, MSHDA, (517) 373-9349
- Sue Eby, Michigan Department of Community Health, (517) 373-6367
- Maureen Szutarski, Fannie Mae, (313) 596-6738

6. Other program information:

A. Cheryl Trommater drew the group's attention to the video & manual available on the table at the back of the room. A House for All Children: Planning a Supportive Home Environment for Children with Disabilities was developed by the Center for Architecture and Building Science Research at the New Jersey Institute of Technology,

supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Several copies were available through the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council.

B. Tony Wong announced availability of a training session on Section 504 and the Housing Design Act the following Thursday. He also asked that the group bear in mind two critical issues:

- Increasingly, people with disabilities with limited incomes can't find accessible, affordable rentals; and
- There is no single source of information about which municipalities in Michigan provide housing assistance.

7. There was general consensus that the next meeting should focus on planning the workgroup's direction for the coming year.

March

1. Introductions. The meeting came to order a little late because of problems with parking and getting access to the building. Those attending introduced themselves.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved by consensus.
3. Election of Co-Chair. Tony Wong agreed to serve as co-chair of the workgroup. Following discussion of the meeting place and schedule, the workgroup decided that future meetings would be held in the conference room at the DD Council Office at 1:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month in which the workgroup meets. (For the immediate future, that will be July 9 and October 8.)
4. Recap. The group briefly reviewed the workgroup's charge, purpose, and what has been discussed to date. Staff referred to the handout, "Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council Committees and Work Groups: Charges, Membership, and Procedures." The DD Council's Executive Director recently issued this document to all council groups and committees, and has

asked that it appear on each group's agenda.

Action: The workgroup approved the revisions to the "Charge to the Workgroup,"

which resulted from discussion at its January 22 meeting.

Discussion of the issues identified at the January meeting followed. The handout, "What Next?" was reviewed.

Olga Savic from Representative Tobocman's staff, described a bill that Representative Tobocman is co-sponsoring as part of a package of affordable housing bills.

5. Work plan. The group discussed its work plan and how it should begin addressing the issues identified. A number of other groups are working on affordability, and the workgroup considered addressing accessibility first, at least in developing strategies for their advocacy agenda. A federal bill on visitability is in the works, so advocacy on this issue is timely. In discussion of what further information the group needs to seek out, several suggestions emerged about people and organizations who might be invited to join the workgroup.

April

1. Introductions. The meeting was called to order and members introduced themselves.
2. Minutes.
3. Consumer recruitment. The workgroup discussed ways to increase consumer input into its work. Suggestions included:
 - A. Calling attention to the DD Council's reimbursement of the cost of travel to workgroup meetings;
 - B. Current members identifying consumers interested in participating and bringing them to meetings;

- C. Surveying consumers at forums and gatherings like the upcoming Co-Power Action Day.

4. Position papers and

5. Advocacy Agenda.

Members reviewed the draft outlines for position papers and the advocacy agenda.

As the discussion evolved, the group agreed on a preliminary approach to developing these workgroup products. Elements include (not necessarily in this order):

- A. Developing the positions, then basing strategies for the advocacy agenda on them.
- B. A preamble or statement of principles, both for pulling the position statements together and as a basis for developing the advocacy agenda.
- C. Success stories about people who navigated the system, got homes of their own and the supports they need, and were able to maintain their living situation.
- C. Because the issues are so interrelated, we will probably need to develop one position paper with (currently) an unspecified number of points, issues or positions;
- D. Surveys of consumers, with a checklist of issues, both to help those surveyed to think about the issues and to structure input in a way that can be aggregated usefully. Staff will develop the checklist from the information workgroup members return with the survey form "Housing Workgroup: Priorities for Policy Development." This form was in the handouts for the meeting and will be distributed to members who were unable to be present.
- E. Task groups (or subcommittees) to work on pieces of the task between the workgroup's quarterly meetings. Staff will draft the products from content developed by task group members.

- F. Timelines for this first phase:
- 1) Member surveys will go out this week. They will need to be back to staff by April 25, 2003.
 - 2) Staff will consult with MDRC and develop the consumer survey for the Co-Power Action Day, scheduled for May 8, 2003. Surveys will also be distributed to workgroup members for their use in seeking input from consumers they work with.
 - 3) If possible, distribution of survey results at the Affordable Housing Conference on June 2.
- G. Three subcommittees were designated for the preliminary work. Staff will forward the membership survey to members who were not present, asking for volunteers to join the groups and to coordinate the 2 that are currently without coordinators. The groups are:
- 1) Affordability. We still need a coordinator. Mark Craig will be a member of this group. Members suggested that Bill Doub and Rhonda McGill both have specialized knowledge of this area. The group still needs a coordinator.
 - 2) Accessibility. Peg Ball is coordinator, Sue Hart and Gabrielle Frampton are members.
 - 3) Personal support services. We still need a coordinator. Heidi Bahr and Rich Lodge are members. This group still needs a coordinator.
- H. Each group will be responsible for:
- 1) Receiving the data that staff aggregates from workgroup members' survey responses; and later, information from consumers' survey responses.
 - 2) Identifying further information needed for the workgroup's efforts in its area of interest. (e.g., presenters for workgroup meetings, documents, etc.)
 - 3) Developing content for draft position statements about issues that fall within its area. A position statement will usually be one page or less.
 - 4) Identifying the stakeholders (other than workgroup members) who should be asked to review drafts and provide input. E.g., builders, personal assistants, secondary consumers (family members), ISD transition coordinators . . .
 - 5) Optionally, identifying other activities or products the workgroup should undertake, now or in the future.
- I. Terrie Hylton is pulling together a resource handbook for non-profits. She needs information from members about several of the services discussed in workgroup meetings. E.g., the legal service mentioned at the March meeting.
- J. The workgroup discussed at some length the problems around how to coordinate everything a consumer needs to get a home, who helps people navigate the system. It was suggested that each county should have a continuum of care group that should have a role in that.

Education Work Group

January

Discussion took place that the Focus Group is to include all Education Work Group members and grantees.

There was a discussion to move the Education Work Group meetings from Wednesday meetings due to members needs and to hold the meetings at different locations. Some

suggestions included: Wayne County, Genesee County, Saginaw County, and Kent County.

Also discussed was to have the Education Work Group meet on the same day as the Family Support Work Group.

There was an announcement that the Council for Exceptional Children Conference will occur in Grand Rapids on February 27–28. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) representatives would be there.

It was discussed that IDEA Reauthorization should be pressing policy issue for the council. There is a Special Education Advisory Committee position statement on IDEA.

Reauthorization IDEA focuses on:

Paperwork reduction

Disciplinary actions, which includes assault vs. disruption

The PAC's position on IDEA is to keep "as is" but enforce it.

There was discussion on charter schools being a direct threat as public policy. Some will be special education charter schools. Monitoring charter schools for IDEA is not happening.

It was discussed to have the March presentation at the council right before lunch or right after. This will be discussed with Vendella Collins.

Outline of presentation to the Council

1. Introduction - why is this an urgent issue?

This is separate from adult

issues. Long-term goal needs inclusive schools to move into inclusive

communities. There is a building demand. Assignments include Lynne's story on neighborhood fire incident and Vera's story on Head Start

2. What does good inclusive education look like (as a vision)?

Short video(s) and Lauri's story.

3. How it's not being done.

Barb's data (1 page graph) and Marta's story

4. Adopt inclusive education commitment of a position statement. Draft will be presented for Council consideration.

5. Discussion/potential adoption of paper

Bud will check on meeting room capacity for CD/computer presentations.

Next meeting moved to Friday, February 7, 2003 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm.

The March draft agenda will include:

- IDEA Reauthorization

- Draft position paper

- Speak with Glenn Ashley on focus groups/longitudinal studies on council education projects

Family Support Work Group

February

The group reviewed the Longitudinal Study of past family support council activities. The process included reviewing 6 predetermined questions that all Longitudinal Study Focus Groups will utilize.

The summary will be forwarded to the DD Council in the near future. The study will bring issues to the consideration of the work group and council for their future consideration and action.

Some identified potential issues for the work group to consider include:

Bring family support issues to the front of the new administration;

Consider a conference on family support issues and supports;

Look at assistive technology in terms of family support;

Review outcomes from DDI Study on expansion of subsidy;

Train more family supports coordinators by possibly supporting a conference with the statewide family supports coordinators; and
Obtain more members to the Family Support Work Group.

A more detailed list of activities will be available after the summaries of all reports have been presented to the DD Council.

The WG will be working on developing its work plan and being trained on Organizational Learning as a process for developing recommendations for the council.

Public Policy Committee

March

Agenda:

1. Co-Power Action Day 5/8/03
2. Sutton nomination to the 6th Circuit Court: Update
3. Legislative Reception: Debriefing
4. Possible Medicaid Block Grants from Washington
5. State of Michigan: Budget Changes for 2003 and 2004 Home and Community Based Waiver: MI Choice Update
Olmstead Issues
Medicaid Changes: Buy-In
6. DARTA Update and Other Transportation News
7. Other

Due to Chairperson Duncan Wyeth's absence, Ellen Weaver helped lead the group through its agenda today.

Co-Power Action Day will be at the Capital on May 8, 2003. The event is being held to meet with policy makers to get services. MDRC is organizing this event and Kathryn Wyeth is the contact person. RICCs have begun to

receive the information on this event.

It was reported that Jeffrey Sutton was confirmed to the Federal 6th Circuit Court of Appeals (we later learned that while Sutton was voted out/approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee, he had not actually been confirmed by the full Senate). A great deal of advocacy work has been done in opposition to his confirmation.

There was an excellent turnout at the Legislative Reception. The legislators circulated throughout the room and talked a lot. They seemed very interested in what people had to say. We are looking at putting together evaluation forms specifically for the legislators in the future. A wheelchair user had a concern that there was not enough room to move around and that the room was too crowded. Next year we would like to get more legislators to attend. There was a suggestion that we get media coverage for the event.

Medicaid Block Grants from Washington – National Governor's Association opposes. States have optional block grants that may be applied to utilize funds. More money would be available now. The proposal gives states more money and more flexibility to design Medicaid programs. They would be required to pay back some or all of the block grant money within a 10-year period. This would eliminate a Medicaid entitlement in block grant states.

The Medicaid Summit website has not posted any new questions. Second round responses are posted on the website, as well as key strategies that are now under way. Granholm and Olszewski thanked everyone for their participation and ideas.

The Medicaid Summit Draft Letter was discussed. Concerns about the Medicaid Summit include: the way that questions that were phrased, timing was bad, there was short

turnaround time, it was unwieldy, and there was a limited choice of items. The process forced you to talk about the small issues. – artificial constraint. It was discussed to write a “Dear Governor” letter to be more involved to be flexible and more reader friendly. Jane Reagan volunteered to review the draft.

MI Waiver 1915(b) deadline has been extended to June 2003. Fear that outliers (those few individuals who are very expensive to serve) will break the bank.

Hall motioned to approve minutes of last meeting and Reagan seconded. Motion approved.

Olmstead issues – The Medicaid MI Choice Waiver is going to be reopened; they are going to keep the number of slots they have and fill them as individuals leave. They are talking about doing another waiver for individuals in nursing homes. The Olmstead Coalition is developing a letter addressing the Reg. Carter letter. The new Administration promised to develop an Olmstead Task Force and the Olmstead Coalition plans to remind them of that promise.

A Medicaid Buy-In may happen soon. Department of Career Development is very interested. Tony Wong of MACIL is working extensively on the Buy-In.

The Common Disability Agenda is in final planning. It will be next week at the Capitol Rotunda. There will be 15 booths with 15 different issues of concern to the disability constituency. This is a well-publicized event.

DARTA update. UCP has a new publication called “Regional Ride”, which will be distributed at the Council meeting. Transportation House Committee passed HB4072 (DARTA bill), which allows local

communities to opt out. The major opposition to DARTA is the concern that it would take money from other areas of the state. Budget for buses and other transportation stayed the same for FY2004. Granholm is in favor of “Fix it First, Fix it Right” for roads. Granholm formed a new group to combat urban sprawl, which may have an impact on transportation in the state.

Public Comments –Ellen Weaver stated that Governor Taft of Ohio eliminated Independent Living Centers. 10 CILs and 1 SILC have closed.

Todd Koopmans stated that the Supreme Court will be hearing ADA cases this spring. CA withdrew its case.

Elmer Cerano received a letter written by Rep. Jack Brandenburg to the State Licensing Division (C.I.S.) opposing licensing to a group home in St. Clair Shores. In the letter Brandenburg stated that the group home residents should be sent to the country to work hard and be cured first and then brought back into the community. If this letter is followed, it may be a violation of the Fair Housing Act.

Ellen Weaver motioned to adjourn. Pamela Hall seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Transportation Work Group

March

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed upon.

The action plan was discussed. There needs to be some agreement on the action plan. We need to bring the LACs and the RICCs together. The structures are in place, but there is no money.

Stu Lindsay stated he is concerned about the areas that are unserved and underserved. A map needs to be created to show where gaps in service can be readily seen. Need a clear picture of those gaps. Diane stated that we need local funding. Stu stated that the loudest voice is a local voice.

Diane stated that we need to get to the legislators both downstate and in the UP. We also need to get the locals working.

Harold stated that a transportation consumer survey about LACs will be distributed in the UP. He will send results to the work group via Kevin Wisselink. He stated that Rep. Brown wants copies. Harold stated that Stu's map idea is a good first step to filling in the service gaps. Diane stated that one part of the map should show House and Senate jurisdictions, plus census data. This is a statewide issue. Margaret says a map helps secure 95% of federal funds. Harold stated that rural advocates say their federal portion is much different.

Diane stated that there should be an overlay on the map indicating the aging population.

Alfonso stated he talked to the state representative from Allegan County and the map would be nice to show him. Alfonso added that Holland got new buses the first of the year. He added that Dial-A-Ride started in Ottawa County in 1973. Alfonso has also been in touch with the Holland City Council about transportation issues and he also expects to contact the area's LAC.

Stu stated that his office expects four new accessibility plans. The office needs LCA input on the accessibility.

Alfonso stated that the transit system is expanding in Holland. At this point, Diane acknowledges Alfonso's dedication to changing

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transportation services in Michigan and his continuing commitment to the work group. As an example, she stated that on the work group's meeting day, he leaves Holland on the Greyhound bus at 7:50 a.m., arriving in Lansing at 9:55 a.m.. After the meeting, he must wait until the bus leaves Lansing at 8:20 p.m. and doesn't get back to Holland until 10:15 p.m. Diane says that's a long day!

Regarding the merging of the RICCs with LACs, Diane says need to get LAC contacts for each particular RICC.

Multicultural Committee

March summary

The Committee reviewed materials for the retreat presentation. It was agreed that color maps, updated census information and other graphic-type materials will be added to create a diversity/competence folder to be distributed to attendees.

In reviewing Committee goals, two opportunities for collaboration were identified. It was agreed that the display board and informational materials should be available to people attending the health fair in Lansing in September. Angela will provide details needed to plan for participation. It was also agreed that the Committee and/or its membership will submit presentation proposals for the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference. Mitzi and Terry will pursue the details needed for participation.

Health Issues Work Group

February

Deb Ziegler provided an update on activities at MDCH:

Reconfigure system of collaboration, decision making between Public Health, Medical

Services Administration (Medicaid) and Mental Health.

Realign for better consumer/advocate/employee input. Workgroup members are hopeful that the new administration continues its efforts to solicit input and actually use that information to develop policy and improve practice.

Dept. has held meetings to get real consumer/advocate input - especially regarding Sullivan.

Jan Olszewski is better director. She is willing to do more with less.

Consumers participated in meeting with Department. More “angst” driven, focus on deficit.

Interdepartmental meeting around Child Development (0-5 years), included; CIS, EDU, FIA and Substance Abuse, all State Advocates. Group discussed education from birth through 12th grade.

The Disability Agenda provides a good first step to unify disability advocacy.

Members discussed creating a unified front - Disability agenda (18 month calendar/schedule).

- should define key policy
 - vision
 - objectives
 - key strategies
 - work toward finding solutions for fiscal crisis
 - should include all advocacy groups
- Our message: An integrated system of long term supports promoting independence leads to cost savings, healthier

individuals, self sufficiency and improved quality of life. Long term supports must be community based and premised on self-determination and PCP. Systems must be designed to be

responsive and based on a value base of maintaining supports coordination and supports brokering. Visual of links which support people to live independently. Supports do not need to be reinvented, but, resources need to be shifted to support community supports.

Members discussed upcoming events: Rep. Ehardt is Chair of Health Policy committee

He has established three subcommittees Cost /Medicaid Buy-In, Access, and Prevention Members should come up with 1 primary issue for each of Rep. Ehardt’s 3 areas of focus

Cost, Access and Prevention.

Don’t eliminate any of these programs to reduce cost.

Confirmation for MDCH Director is expected to go smoothly. Describes vision for Department

Confirmation for Annette Bowler - Director FIA (hearing is expected to be challenged).

Nomination for Jeffrey Patton has been withdrawn

Health and Human Services Secretary Thompson - Medicaid package on the

4 states want to participate. Federal changes in Medicaid funding and policies have been announced. This proposal essentially “block grants” Medicaid and entices States to support this by increasing funding to those States.

table

Health Issues Work Group should investigate/respond to Federal Issues distributed publication from *HalfthePlanet.com* that discussed upcoming changes to Medicaid program. Also Kaiser

Network and Center on Budget and Policy

Priorities.

Focus Group update -

Initial meeting will be limited to previous grantees group will discuss recommendations for future Council activity.

Members suggested Skillman, Mott and other foundations should be invited to participate in our focus groups. This could help build synergy in various issues. Members felt the focus group data collection should be recorded in a way that all can know information is being recorded. Perhaps a laptop could have a projection screen so members can see.

Legislative Reception update -

Health Issues are a priority:

- Access.
- Coordinated system.
- CSHCS should be a model for other groups to demonstrate proper coordination of care.
- One main issue to discuss - under each subcommittee area, not to eliminate programs under cost saving program.
- MI Choice waiver.